

# Madrid-Man City & PSG-Chelsea Lead Champions League Round of 16

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*Kylian Mbappé of Real Madrid during the playoff match against Benfica on February 17, 2026. © AP Photo/Pedro Rocha*

The **UEFA Champions League** round of 16 kicks off with high-voltage rematches, teams ending decades-long absences, and the inspiring debut of Norway's **Bodø/Glimt**.

## The Main Events

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**Real Madrid vs. Man City**

**PSG vs. Chelsea**

Meeting for the fifth consecutive year. Haaland's late penalty in December gave City a 2-1 edge at the Bernabéu. All eyes are on **Kylian Mbappé**, currently a doubt with a knee strain.

A true European rivalry renewed after 10 years. Chelsea—under manager Liam Rosenior—looks to repeat their 3-0 victory from last summer's exhibition.

### **The Arctic Frontier: Bodø/Glimt**

Bodø/Glimt ends a 29-year wait for Norwegian representation. They host Sporting Lisbon inside the **Arctic Circle** on artificial turf. Expected temperature: **3°C (37°F)**. Both Inter Milan and Man City have already lost at this venue in recent months.

## Historical Context

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- **23 Years** **Newcastle United** returns to the knockout stage for the first time since 2003, hosting Barcelona.
- **12 Years** **Galatasaray** returns to March Champions League football, facing Liverpool.
- **1963** Tottenham vs. Atletico Madrid is a rare rematch of the 1963 Cup Winners' Cup final.

*"When you step onto the pitch, you don't remember where you are in the standings... The players want to win."*

— **Diego Simeone, Atletico Madrid Manager**

## League Phase Seedings

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The new format shows that finishing first doesn't guarantee safety. **Arsenal** enters as the top seed against 16th-seeded **Bayer Leverkusen**, while **Liverpool** looks to avoid a repeat of last year's early exit despite a strong league finish.

